

NEEDHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

November 2, 2009

The regular meeting of the Planning Board held in Room 308 in the Newman School, was called to order by Jeanne McKnight, Chairman, on Tuesday, November 2, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. with Messrs. Warner, Ruth, and Jacobs as well as Planning Director, Ms. Newman and Recording Secretary, Ms. Kalinowski.

Public Hearings

6:00 p.m. – Major Project Site Plan Special Permit No. 2009-06: Town of Needham, 1471 Highland Avenue, Needham, Massachusetts, Petitioner (Property located at 1471 Highland Avenue, Needham, Massachusetts).
(Please note this is a continued hearing).

Ms. McKnight noted this was continued so plans could be submitted. Ms. Newman stated she wanted dimensions of the building, building setback and the curb cut on Garrity Way. The parking relief required dimensionally showed the curb cut off Chapel. The Board version shows a maximum width of 18 feet. Ms. McKnight noted the following correspondence for the record: an e-mail from Thomas Ryder, dated 11/2/09, noting no comments or objections. Mr. Ruth commented he wants to hear about pedestrian safety. Steve Popper, of the PPBC, stated he made it clear last time. It is a restricted parking area for only town employees. It is not an active parking lot. The walking area will be clear by a change in pavement. He does not feel there is a safety hazard. Mr. Jacobs asked if delivery vehicles go there and was informed they do but not to park, only to deliver. They will be stopped in the drive area. Mr. Ruth noted no parking at night. Mr. Popper stated they made no determination as to whether they will sign it. Enforcement might change. Mr. Ruth noted the decision should be clear it is restricted to town employees during scheduled work hours. Ms. McKnight asked if there was any objection to that. Mr. Popper did not believe there would be.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ruth, and seconded by Mr. Jacobs, it was by the four members present unanimously VOTED: to close the hearing.

Ms. McKnight proposed on page 9, section 3.5, it should read "9 spaces which will be solely for town employees during work hours." Ms. Newman noted she added on page 9 provisions that speak to deliveries, such as how and when, in section 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8. Mr. Popper noted they should change the wording to "another location" rather than "MBTA lot." Ms. McKnight suggested "the MBTA lot or another offsite location or Defazio, Chapel and Highland reserved for the project." Mr. Popper noted there is only off loading on Highland Avenue as a staging area. He clarified Chapel is for walking, not off loading. Fencing will block the sidewalk. Ms. McKnight asked if section 3.6 "south and north side" was correct. Mr. Popper confirmed it was correct but they would like to be able to off load on Highland Avenue also. Mr. Ruth commented he would like an assurance both Highland and Chapel would not be adversely affected at the same time. Mr. Popper does not expect to see that. Ms. McKnight would like to add "or on property adjacent if a police detail is provided." Mr. Ruth added "provided not on both simultaneously." Mr. Popper reiterated there would not be any off loading on Chapel Street. Ms. Newman noted she added sections 3.12 through 3.18 and changed the construction schedule in section 3.27. Ms. Clee commented in section 3.5 the narrative is different on the 2 options. Ms. Newman will fix this. Mr. Popper stated he would like the architect to review the details over the next day or so. He feels the number 53 is too restricting in section 3.4. Ms. Newman will look at this and what the parking analysis shows. Mr. Ruth asked if they need to take action tonight or could they wait until 11/17. There is a lot of movement in the decision tonight. Mr. Popper noted he is putting up the bid documents on 11/16 but it would be ok holding it back. He would like to have a general essence of it so the contract documents do not have to be revised. Ms. McKnight asked the Planning Director to amend the draft decision and noted they are open to considering further changes.

Informal Discussion: Roy Cramer, proposed new use at 73 Chestnut Street.

Roy Cramer, representative for the applicant, noted they are looking at 73 Chestnut Street which was the rug building and Health Fit. They originally leased the front building to convert the first floor to physical therapy, occupational therapy and some executive therapies. The second floor would be administrative offices. It is not financially feasible to make the second floor handicap accessible. The parking requirement is 21. There is a maximum of 12 staff in the

front building to park on site. There will be 6 in exam rooms for a maximum occupancy, with 6 waiting, of 24. The only change is to make the front handicap accessible. There are 51 parking spaces on the ground and they can restripe to get 54. There are 6 spaces along Keith Place they would use for employee parking. At 100% they would need 24 spaces and they have 21. It is very close. Mr. Jacobs noted Keith Place is confusing and commented on the left there is a driveway. Mr. Cramer noted yes, it is closed with a gate. Mr. Jacobs asked who owned Keith Place. Mr. Cramer noted it is a private way. Each abutter owns to the middle. He noted the front building is a priority. Mr. Warner stated it would be a help to see the Garden Center building on the site plan when they come to present. Mr. Cramer will put it on. He added Health Fit went out and they have leased the back building. He noted they are looking at putting 2 surgical sub specialties there. There would be 30 staff – 6 positions and 24 support positions. There would be 12 patients at any one time at one hour each. Full occupancy creates a parking problem. It works if the back building is staggered. They have 36 spaces left if the front building is full. He is convinced the front building works. He is not sure about in back with sub specialties. It works from a zoning point of view with both buildings. Giles Ham noted the front building has about 21 spaces. It will be tight if the back building is full. Mr. Cramer noted he would like to have a dialogue now.

Ms. McKnight asked what relief they are requesting. Mr. Cramer stated site plan review. If the uses are allowed as a matter of right they may only need alteration of a non-conforming structure and perhaps a parking waiver of 3 if they can not count Keith Place. There are 54 on site and 6 Keith Place spaces. Jeff Liebman, of Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, noted the back building would probably be private practices. Mr. Ruth commented he is very supportive of this project. He would work with them on the parking issue. He feels they have to look at the whole thing together. Both buildings are underutilized. One issue is the campus generally. This is a significant addition to the campus. He would like to know generally the vision of the campus. Mr. Warner noted this is a fine project. They are short 12 spaces and there is parking all day. He asked if they could not be stacked. Ms. McKnight stated the downtown study assumed the hospital would be the main generator of parking in this area. Mr. Jacobs stated he has no problem counting the 6 spaces on Keith Place. He thinks they should be employee only, though.

Request for Permanent Occupancy Permit and Bond Release: Major Project Site Plan Review No. 2007-05: 868 Highland Avenue, LLC, 66 Crescent Road, Needham, MA 02494, Petitioner (Property located at 868 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA).

Ms. Newman noted everything was fine.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ruth, and seconded by Mr. Jacobs, it was by the four members present unanimously VOTED: to approve the request.

Endorsement of Correction Decision: Definitive Subdivision Amendment: Standish Road Realty Trust, Alfred Volante, Trustee, 226 Brookside Road, Needham, Massachusetts, Petitioner (Property located at the end of Brewster Drive in Needham, MA).

Ms. Newman noted it had an incorrect address. It said 66 on the plan not 68. The subdivision plan is not approved yet and will be corrected. Mr. Ruth did not participate.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Jacobs, and seconded by Mr. Warner, it was by three of the four members present (Mr. Ruth did not vote) VOTED: to approve the corrected version.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ruth, and seconded by Mr. Jacobs, it was by the four members present unanimously VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Kalinowski, Notetaker


Ron Ruth, Vice-Chairman and Clerk